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Title: Regarding modernisation of agriculture.

SHRI K. ASHOK KUMAR (KRISHNAGIRI): The demand for diversified food products, processed foods and quality certification is mounting with the growth of an affluent middle class. Learning from past mistakes, natural resources must be safeguarded to ensure equitable rewards from agricultural growth.

Primarily by the public research and extension system, the adoption of the high yielding varieties came to be known as the Green Revolution. Buffer stocks through State procurement with Minimum Support Price enabled year-round availability of foodgrains in any part of the country.

The need to produce more food continues as the population is still growing. This has to be done in a sustainable manner, with more prudent use of imputs, lower emissions of green house gases and improvements in natural capital. With a shrinking natural resource base, we need to produce more from less. technologies are needed to optimise productivity not only per unit of land but also per unit of water, labour and energy. Over the next few years, plants that tolerate drought, floods, salinity and extreme heat will revolutionise the cultivation of the most important source of calories. Management of natural disasters will become critical as the frequency and severity of climate induced extreme events increase. Farmers welfare measures through enhanced productivity, off farm income generation insurance, social security and safety nets are safeguards against agrarian distress.

I urge upon the Union Government to initiate steps for a more widespread impact, incentives and policies in the right direction to boost agriculture production.